

c. determine from the traffic conditions and from the desired characteristic associated with the requested communication whether to route the communication to the first communications network or to the second communications network.

69. (New) The system according to claim 68, wherein the desired characteristic associated with a requested communications includes at least one of a desired quality of service for the communication, a time during which the communication is to be routed, a cost of routing the communication, or a user's preferred communications mode for having communications contact established with another.

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70. (New) The system according to claim 68, wherein the bridge component is further configured to:

d. select an access point of the determined network to which the communication is to be routed; and

e. initiate the routing of the communication to the selected access point for the determined network.

71. (New) The system according to claim 7, wherein said application resource object comprises a universal messaging node, said universal messaging node is configured to integrate at least two messages having different types.

72. (New) The system according to claim 71, wherein said different message types include a plurality of an e-mail message, a facsimile message, a voice mail message and a video mail message.

73. (New) The system according to claim 71, wherein said universal messaging node is configured to provide access to each of said different message types over at least one of said first communication network and said second communication network.

74. (New) The system according to claim 73, wherein said first communication network is a POTS network.

75. (New) The system according to claim 71, wherein said universal messaging node has signal processing capability for processing the payload information.

76. (New) The system according to claim 8, wherein said application database includes a data set to support a plurality of service applications.

77. (New) The system according to claim 8, wherein said application database is an active user registry database (AUR) that is configured to store user communications contact information including at least one of a telephone number, a facsimile number, a mobile telephone number, and an e-mail address.

78. (New) The system according to claim 77, wherein said AUR is further configured to store at least one of a set of user profiles and at least one user's preferred communications option.

79. (New) The system according to claim 8, further comprising an application resource object that is configured to coordinate the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions.

80. (New) The system according to claim 79, wherein said application resource object and said application database are each linked to said communications management object.

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81. (New) The system according to claim 8, wherein said application database is configured to determine a user's Internet Protocol (IP) address.

82. (New) A system for bridging a first communications network having a payload subnetwork and a signaling subnetwork with a second communications network that is packet-switched, comprising:

a. a communications management object being configured to coordinate the transfer of information between the first communications network and the second communications network;

b. a payload object linked to the communications management object, said payload object being configured to transfer payload information between the system and the payload subnetwork of the first communications network;

c. a signaling object linked to the communications management object, said signaling object being configured to transfer signaling information between the system and the signaling subnetwork of the first communications network in accordance with a signaling protocol associated with the signaling subnetwork;

d. a packet object linked to the communications management object, said packet object being configured to transfer payload and address information between the system and the second communications network in accordance with a communications protocol associated with the second communications network; and

e. an application database linked to the communications management object, said application database being configured to determine a called user's preferred communications mode for establishing communications contact with another user.

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83. (New) The system according to claim 82, wherein said application database is an active user registry database (AUR) configured to store said called user's communications contact information including at least one of a telephone number, a facsimile number, a mobile telephone number, and an e-mail address.

84. (New) The system according to claim 83, wherein said AUR is further configured to store at least one of a set of user profiles and at least one user's preferred communications option.

85. (New) The system according to claim 82, further comprising an application resource object that is configured to coordinate the handling of operations, administration, maintenance and provisioning functions.

86. (New) The system according to claim 85, wherein said application resource object and said application database are each linked to said communications management object.

87. (New) The system according to claim 82, wherein said application database is configured to determine a user's Internet Protocol (IP) address.

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88. (New) The system according to claim 82, wherein said application database includes a data set to support a plurality of service applications.

89. (New) The system according to claim 1 further comprising:  
a phone markup language (PML) interpreter linked to the communications management object.

90. (New) The system according to claim 89, wherein said PML interpreter is configured to convert HTML-like commands into audio server requests.

91. (New) The system according to claim 89, further comprising an application resource object that is configured to handle interactive voice response (IVR) applications.

92. (New) The system according to claim 89, further comprising an application resource object that is configured to handle PML applications.

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concl.* 93. (New) The system according to claim 92, wherein said PML applications include at least one of a banking application, a sales information application, a stock price application, and a weather application.

94. (New) The system according to claim 89, further comprising an application resource object that is configured to handle order confirmation and tracking.

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